

The One That Got To Me

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Summary: "Those words had hurt me more than any injury ever could, most of all, because they had come from her." Nick is shattered with grief after his argument with Judy after her interview. This one-shot will elucidate the activities of our favourite fox after he walks away, up until the moment he reunites with her again. Reviews&PMs are highly appreciated!

The One That Got To Me

Hey my Zootopia loving friends,

First of all, I have to confess that I love foxes and I like rabbits also great deal. With this in mind, it's no wonder I couldn't resist writing a fanfic on Zootopia. I was afraid the movie would have a rigid format, but I was happily surprised by the evolution of all the character's personalities along the way. And I had to admit, I did not see the final twist in villain coming. It was a great movie! Anyway, my story describes the short window where we lose track of our fox Nick, just after Judy's interview. He feels hurt by her remarks on predators and leaves the precinct downhearted. That is where this short begins. I hope you enjoy it!

Kind Regards,

J. Caesar

* * *

The One That Got To Me

"Nick! Wait!"

Judy's voice got overruled by the mass of reporters that formed a tight wall of fur and microphones blocking her way. The journalists'

timing was great as it gave me the opportunity to walk away without her following me. Then it became quiet as the door closed behind me.

Alone again.

I slowly walked down the, apart from the usual background noise, peaceful street. I didn't think of where I was going, I automatically choose the right shortcuts to get far away from the precinct as soon as possible. As a conman that instinct had already more or less grown on me. If you're a hustler, you'd do well to keep your distance from the police. Not that this was the reason I wanted to leave this place so quickly. No, that reason was much dearer to my heart. The sooner I was gone, the smaller the chance Judy would be able to catch up with me. I didn't had the desire to talk to her. Not to anyone actually. I wanted to be on my own. Like I had always managed. Like I had always survived. Like I had always considered to be the best way to avoid getting hurt.

I kicked away a small tin can with the brand name Koala Cola glued onto it. Despite my doleful mood, I was able to enjoy seeing it end up in a garbage can with a perfect curve. However, this cheerfulness only lasted as long as its time of flight.

I didn't know if I was angry, sad or disappointed. I guess it was a combination of all three. What Judy had said back there, was nothing short of discrimination. Predators, and thereby she undeniably spoke of me as well, were reverting to their primitive, savage behaviour That it was likely that uspredators would abandon civilisation. That a close eye had to be kept on us in particular. Reading between the lines, she stated that we were too dangerous to be left without supervision. That we might go berserk at any given moment. All because of who we used to be.

Those words had hurt me more than any injury ever could, most of all, because they had come from her. Judy Hopps, the first animal who I had trusted since that dark day at the scouting. The first animal, other than my parents, who I thought believed in me. Truly thought good of me. Accepted me for who I was, a fox. Though nothing had been farther from the truth. In the end, she didn't know how soon she had to grab her repellent.

No.

In the end there was just one person you could rely on. Yourself. I had made the decision never to trust anyone in my life again many years back and I had been foolish to have thought it would've been any different this time. I wondered why it was that I had opened up to Judy in the first place. When we met, I was quick to mark her as yet another naive soul that had come to Zootopia in pursuit of her dreams. Zootopia, where anyone can be anything. What a joke. That slogan was but a big lie, wrapped up in colourful gift paper, topped with a glimmering ribbon and sold like hot cakes to all those who were gullible enough to fall for it.

Anyway, it was obvious Judy was one of those starry-eyed animals that came to the big city, confident she would be able to turn her dream into a reality. What I hadn't known then, was that she was much more persistent in achieving this goals than I had given her credit for. She had really bitten down in her missing otter case and had shown

true grit in solving it. She even blackmailed me to get there. Although I had been more than agitated at the time that someone had beaten me at my own game, it had simultaneously awoken a sense of intrigue. Who was this bunny, and how come she was so much more determined than any others I had met? And on top of all that, she had, despite my recalcitrance all the way, not hesitated for a second to save my life. Twice if I recall correctly. Because if it hadn't been for her, I'd now be an ice sculpture in Mister Big's basement.

I had somehow felt happy around her from the very beginning, at the elephant's ice cream shop. She had been so kind to me then, where I hadn't done anything to deserve it. She had made me feel comfortable enough to share the most horrible moment of my past, one of the things I had never told anyone before. Of course, the fact that she was easy on the eyes was a contributing factor to me liking her. Her shimmering, amethyst eyes contrasted beautifully with her fluffy, white cheeks. That, combined with her loveable character, high intellect and tenderness, made her a specimen the likes of which I had never seen. Too bad it had all been another lie the world had bestowed on me. When push came to shove, everyone was biased, even cute little Hopps. They all thought me to be an untrustworthy, backstabbing trickster. Why bother trying to persuade them otherwise. It's impossible to fill a cup that is already full.

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Unwittingly, I had ventured into one of the city's many parks. I never got here much and I took a short moment to take in my surroundings before continuing my pace. It was quite beautiful here. Then again, so was Judy and look how that turned out for me. I had to be wary not to fall for the oldest con trick of all: an insidiously good appearance.

All around me, I saw the relaxed faces of animals enjoying their time out here, away from the hectic of their daily jobs. There were some doing yoga where others were merely taking a stroll as I was, there was a couple of gazelles picnicking in the grass under a tree and little further some kids were playing soccer. The weather was great for outdoor activities now, hence I suspected it to be more crowded than on other days. The sun also attempted to brighten my face with its warm light. A wasted effort. I was not in the mood today to enjoy nature's splendour.

A ball came dancing towards me. I stopped it with my foot and looked up to see where it came from. The kids stopped once they saw me picking up the ball. I walked over to one at the front of the group, causing them to exchange glances. Then I noted, it wasn't just them. Other animals in the park gazed at me with wary eyes. It confirmed to me again that every single one of them was one big pile of prejudice.

The one closest to me was a little buck. When I came up in front of him, he looked at me with big eyes. I knew what he was thinking. He was thinking of running away. Thinking of what horrific things I might do to him. Thinking of all those lies his parents probably fed him since his birth. About me and my kind being knavish liars that needed to be muzzled. I chose to take away his fear.

"Here you go, kid."

He stared at the ball that I held in my extended paw for a couple of seconds to determine whether it wasn't some kind of scheme. The moment he realized there was nothing to worry about, he gladly accepted it.

"Thank you." He muttered without looking at me.

I patted him on the head.

"You're welcome."

A minor satisfaction got hold of me as I witnessed them quickly going on with their game. The hateful gazes of the animals around me had subsided. I smirked on the inside. They wanted me to be a deceitful fox, then who am I to deny them that. After that, I exited the park, wearing a brand new pair of sunglasses on my nose.

Suddenly I heard a familiar voice.

"Hey Nick, whatcha doin' brother."

It was Finnick, my partner in crime. He was a nice guy, though only when things were going smooth. His attitude always roughened if our profits did so as well. Judging from his stance now, he was in need of money, thus in need of my assistance.

"Nothing. As you can see." I answered.

"And you ain't wearin' that junior cop badge no more. That mean you done with that rabbit?"

"Yes. I'm done with the rabbit."

I tried to sound as neutral as possible. There was no need for Finnick to know that I felt heartbroken by breaking up my alliance with Judy. I had grown fond of her real quick in the short time we spend together. Maybe more than I should.

"Good... Listen man, I spotted some nice news victims for our cons, you in?"

"No. Not interested."

He gave me an astounded look. His question had been more or less rhetorical as I had rarely turned down a job before and the few times that I had, he had more than often agreed with me afterwards it had been the right call to make.

"What?" He let out surprised, "Why?"

I shrugged.

"Fine." He said surly, "But then you won't be gettin' any of the profit either."

I sensed he only said that in the hope of convincing me nonetheless. I shrugged again to indicate it wasn't working.

"Nick, damn it. What's your problem today!"

I was not in the mood for a long, psychiatric discussion about my broken heart, especially not with Finnick. He'd never understand.

"I need some time alone." I said and turned around.

"Alright! Don't say anything to your friend! Go ahead and walk away! You'll come crawling back to me!" He shouted, "you're nothing without my help!"

I ignored his remarks and continued my stroll of solitude. If I engaged on his taunts, things would only get worse, and telling the truth about Judy would only result in a pointless discussion. He'd surely make fun of me instead of offering any form of mental support. Moreover, the most recent hustle I had planned with Finnick had me run into Judy. I had no desire to see that accidentally occurring again right now. I would eventually turn back to illicit activities, there was no doubt about that, but not yet.

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A little while later I arrived at one of the outskirts of town, my home. It was relatively quiet area as well as in the flat itself. That had been the prime reason for me to settle down here. I preferred solitude and silence over crowds and noise. Most of my neighbours thought the same way, thus making this an excellent spot for all of us to sequester ourselves from the rest of the society. It was also the ideal spot to avoid the suspicious looks of the folk I encountered daily on the streets of Zootopia. Here I was even greeted by some.

*Plock*

A short click echoed through the hallway as I opened the door to my apartment. It smelled weirder than I could remember. Maybe because I had gotten used to the blueberry odour Judy wore and used to freshen up her car. I started by tidying up the room. First off, the clothing I had been too lazy to fold up. I found that my current shirt had a coffee stain. Too bad. I didn't care how I looked anyway. I was alone again, so who was there to judge my appearance? I continued by vacuuming. I couldn't remember when I had done that for the last time. The result, an overfull dust bag, led me to believe it must've been over a month ago. I finalized by washing the clothes that I had found too dirty, an act contradictory to what I claimed earlier. Maybe I cared more about how I looked than I previously thought.

Before turning on the washing machine, I decided to put in the clothes I wore now as well. I took off my shirt and sniffed. The scent of blueberries had nestled itself in the fibres, making it smell like Judy's car. Although normally quite fond of the fruit, they now reminded me of Judy, the very animal I was trying to forget. With a little too much aggression, I shoved the shirt into the washing machine, causing the sleeve to rip. I swore under my breath. I took it out and send it on a one way trip to my garbage can. My pants I put on top. There was nothing wrong with those.

I turned on the machine, put on my pyjamas and laid down in bed. It was fairly early, yet I couldn't think of anything else other than sobbing under my blanket. The only other time I had felt this grief

and disappointment, was the night after the scouting. The pain of being set apart from the others. The pain of being called different and being called a hazard for that same reason. The sorrow of a dream that was crushed without mercy. Back then, the dream of joining the scouts. This time, the dream of having a real friend.

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I woke up the next the day with a bitter headache. It had been a restless night, mostly because I had relived every detail of Judy's interview. As tragic and heart-breaking events tend to stick in our memory the longest, I'd probably suffer from insomnia for the next few days. I had to find something to get my mind of things. To get my mind of Judy. But what?

I opened my curtains and was shocked by the sight of my usually quiet neighbourhood. There were three police cars with blinking lights, stationed in a V-shape around one of the garages opposite of my building. Leaning on the cars, five officers with drawn tranquilizer guns aimed for that same garage and further to the back, a crowd had gathered to watch it all. Inside the garage, a wolf was going completely nuts. He was tearing up everything around him. Clearly a victim of going feral. The sad thing was, that I knew him. He lived one floor above me. I knew him as a quiet, gentle soul, whom I had regrettably conned more than once due to that friendly nature. His rampaging came to a halt when a hippo finally managed to take a shot. The poor fellow was muzzled, caged and taken away. During that time, I had watched in horror at the scene. Will this happen to me too? Did I have to be treated like that again? I felt a rage building. Never would I allow that to happen. Also, I would not let Judy have the satisfaction of being right. I wanted her to regret ever thinking I could go rabid.

I put on yesterday's pants with a clean shirt and started gathering my camping supplies, beginning with m standard kit. I had this in case of emergency head over heels departures. After all, as a con-artist such an occasion is never far. A few pairs of clothes, luckily I had washed most of them. All of the food I had In my room went in next and finally, a picture of me and parents. All packed up, I headed for the door and reached for the knob. Next to it, an artefact of my past caught my attention. It was my dad's fishing rod. He had shown me a time or two how to use it, though I had never truly learned the skills to employ it properly. I opened the door and looked around my apartment. I had everything I needed to leave this place for good. Or hadn't I?

After a last minute change of heart, I yet grabbed the old rod of my father and locked the room. I considered throwing the keys out of the window. No, that would be unnecessarily dramatic. I stuck them into the pocket of my trousers, where it rattled against other stuff. Then, I headed out, never to come back here.

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It took me the entire day to get there, but it would be worth it. It was a remote, industrial estate a few miles out of Zootopia. It had been a production facility for _Dolce&Gibbon-a, _which nobody had bothered to break down after it was abandoned due to health code violations. It had been a safe house for Finnick and me since. We came here when a scam went wrong and it was for the best that we

weren't seen for some time. The last time we were here, was after we sold Mister Big the skunk-but rug. I wondered how much had changed since then. I opened the door to the receptionist's room, our bunker. It was the same way we left it, only it smelled more damp. That could be fixed easily. I connected the fan and opened a window. The electricity might have been powered down the moment the building was closed down, Finnick and I had installed a small solar panel on the roof to sustain ourselves while we were here. With the fan blowing in fresh air from outside, it wouldn't be long before the humidity was abolished.

Meanwhile, I'd be checking out the river, which was just a short walk across the compound. Funnily enough, my lounge chair was still standing below the bridge. It was true that nobody ever came here. The chair was as comfortable as I remembered and I gladly spread myself out across it. From my pocket, I took out the glasses I had heisted in the park. When I did, another thing dropped out on the ground. Without looking, I reached for it and picked it up. Judy's carrot pen. She had given this to me only moments before I walked out on her, breaking off our friendship. Sweet Judy! I shook my head to avoid crying. This thing made me too darn sentimental. I pulled back my arm in order to throw it into the water, however something held me back.

This little, orange object was the only thing I had as a reminder of our time together. I lowered my arm. It had been the glue that had kept us together during the missing mammal case. If not, I'd never had helped her. Then again, I never had gotten to like her either and I wouldn't be here. No, it had to go. I stretched my arm, yet once more wasn't able to cast it into the river. This pen had a sincere emotional value. Judy might have betrayed me, she might have thought I'd go savage and she might even have considered throwing me in jail, none of these things altered the fact that I had enjoyed our partnership. Maybe it was true and I had fallen for that bunny.

I made a decision and put it back into my pocket. If I was going crazy, I might as well cherish the last memory of real life for as long as I could.

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The remainder of the week had gone quite peaceful. Every day had passed by in pretty much the same rhythm. The mornings had started off with breakfast, which had mostly consisted of dried fruit I had brought from home and a bit of fish. Yes indeed, fish. Apparently, I wasn't such a huge failure at angling as I thought I would be. That and I had plenty of time to perfect my skills out here. After breakfast, I'd go straight to the river's edge and continue where I had left off the day before. In the afternoons, I'd go for jogging to keep fit and afterwards, I'd relax in my lounge chair. Supper was identical to my breakfast and before I went back to sleep, I'd fish some more. It was a vital piece of information I had remember, that the fish bite best at dusk and dawn.

Today would be completely different however. After my round of jogging, I had once more settled myself in my chair. For the first time, I felt the urge to read the news on ZNN's website. My instincts told me it would be wise to check up with the latest developments.

There was a lot of stuff about the animals going feral. Still, only predators fell victim to it. Then there was a peace rally by Gazelle. I never really liked that popstar. Maybe I envied her for her success, or maybe it just wasn't my taste of music. Anyway, reading her comments in the article made me believe her to be equally naïve as the rest. 'A city where we celebrate our differences'. I laughed scornfully. I betted she was only doing this to boost her image. A little further down, I read that Assistant Mayor Bellwether had succeeded Mayor Lionheart as new head of Zootopia. I wondered if that cotton ball knew anything about leading a grant city. Then, my eye fell on a tiny article with a lovely, little face in the picture.

Hero of Zootopia quits police force.

I might have been trying to forget Judy, but in all the time I had had out here to overthink it all had made me realized I'd never be able to. I opened the article and started reading.

According to chief Bogo, head of the Zootopia Police Department, the rumours that bunny-legend Judy Hopps has left her uniform in the locker for good are true. Word goes around that her unexpected resign is connected to the missing mammal case were she got here fame. Some say that she broke under the stress of true police workâ€|

I snorted disapprovingly. They had no idea of Judy's perseverance. She didn't quit because the stress. She'd sooner throw in the towel because of being underpaid.

â€|_whereas others state that the reason might reside in an argument she had with a fox, a former friend of hersâ€|_

Me? Had she quit because of me? Somehow I felt flattered.

Chief Bogo was reluctant to go into detail, although he did eventually say that Judy felt guilty about not being able to help out her friends, nor the city in their time of need. Furthermore, he is unaware of the location of her current whereabouts, but does say that she had given thought to picking up her old life again. He also urges us not to go and seek her out as she deserved some time off.

So she felt guilty. For good reason. With that interview she had not only incriminated me, but all predators in Zootopia. On the other hand, I did feel a little sorry for her. She was merely a bunny, trying to save an entire world from collapsing. The fact that this thought sprang up in my mind had me reckon I cared for her a lot more than I would ever dare to admit. I missed that blissful little face of hers, especially those bright, lilac eyes that I adored so much. When I closed my eyes, I could picture her in her cute meter maid outfit. I could even hear her voice calling my name.

"Nick!"

Wait a second.

"Nick!"

That wasn't imagination. That was real. She was really here. How did that happen?

"Nick!"

I heard her draw closer. Darn it. How did she appear at the very moment when I was crying over her. I quickly dried my eyes and put on the sunglasses. I wasn't planning on letting her get to me again. I laid back as relaxed as possible and picked up my drink. It was commendable that she had come to find me, though that didn't erase the events of the past.

Her fuzzy face appeared on top of the bridge.

"Oh Nick!" she let out relieved.

Her voice sounded as if she was happy to have found me and I felt excited about seeing her too, however I successfully managed not to exert any signs of it. I might have revised my secluded attitude earlier on, her hurtful words had more than resurrected my emotional barrier.

"Night howlers aren't wolves. They're toxic flowers. I think someone is targeting predators on purpose and making them go savage."

I put down my drink slowly.

"Wahw! Isn't that interesting." I responded cynically.

I threw aside the sunglasses. For a moment I had had the hope she was here to apologize. Apparently, she was just here because she needed my help again. Did she honestly believe I had forgotten? Oh well, it's not that I didn't see that coming. As long as she wasn't sorry about what she said, I had no interest in talking to her and I walked away. Not surprisingly, it didn't take her long to follow me.

"Wait, Lisâ€¦ Iâ€¦ I'll know you'll never forgive me. And I don't blame you."

I stopped. This sounded unexpectedly promising. Maybe she was had come to apologize.

"I wouldn't forgive me either. It was ignorant, irresponsible and small-minded. But predators shouldn't suffer because of my mistakesâ€¦"

Now there was a hard truth that needed to be said. It had probably cost her some effort to muster those words, although they were all true and I was glad she had admitted her mistake. With that ridiculous claim about biology, she had not only turned the city upside down. She had also verbally lashed out at me, her friend. I had trusted her and she had stabbed me in the back. It was good that she had come to realize that herself also.

"â€¦I have to fix this. But I can't do it without youâ€¦"

She really was a far more intelligent than the average bunny. And far more compassionate too. If I had ever been mad with her, I wasn't anymore.

"And afterwards, you can hate me." She began to sob in between her words. "Andâ€¦ and that'll be fine, becauseâ€¦ I have been a horrible friendâ€¦"

Perhaps I was being too harsh on her. It was evident now that she didn't mean all she had said. Maybe it had been the nerves of her first interview. She was an amicable animal and apart from that poor choice of words, she had never done anything to intentionally upset me. And seeing her in tears like this, I could only be mollified. I wanted to reconsolidate and forgive her, all I needed was the right timing. And I had the perfect tool for that right here in my pocket.

"and I hurt you. And you can walk away knowing that you were right, all alongâ€¦ I really am just a dumb bunny."

She cried heartbreakingly. I had to comfort her. But not before I had rewound the pen's recorder and played it to her. Twice.

"Don't worry, Carrots. I'll let you erase it. In forty-eight hours."

She smiled to me and more tears trickled down her cheeks. I spread out my arms.

"Alright, get in here."

She sauntered towards me, evading my look. She put her head against my chest and wetted my shirt with her crying. I gently embraced her, stroking her ears. I was happy that we could conclude this horrendous chapter in the history of our friendship.

"Okay. All you bunnies, so emotional."

I had no idea if this was true, all I desired now, was to make her smile again.

"There we go, deep breaths."

She hugged my waist firmly and I continued stroking her soft, grey fur. She was so adorable.

"Are you just trying to steal the pen, is that what this is?"

She laughed at me. I loved her laugh. It was the most loveable sound possible to my ears. I was sure that the main purpose of my life would revolve around her and her smile. Moments like these were worth more than any profitable hustle. Just me and her hugging each other. What could ruin this moment?

*Step*

"You are standing on my tail though. Aw-aw-aw!"

"Sorry!"

* * *

><p>That was it. I hope you enjoyed it! I want to write another, more extensive, fanfiction on Zootopia, but I'm not sure when or if I got time to do that. I'm usually highly occupied with work, study and other stuff. Either way, please share your opinion with me in a review or a PM! I'd love to hear it! _

**Kind Regards, **

End
file.